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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE GROUP

INTELLIGENCE REPORT

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COUNTRY Austria
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DATE: 8 March 1947

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SUBJECT



DIST. 29 April 1947

ORIGIN



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SUPPLEMENT

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1. A meeting took place recently between Julius Deutsch, a leader of the Austrian Socialist Party, and Julius Raab, head of the Economic Union (Wirtschaftsbund) of the Austrian People's Party, for the purpose of effecting an exchange of views on the size and nature of the future Austrian Army.
2. After agreeing that there must never be a repetition of the events which led up to the civil disorders of 1934, the two leaders turned to details, and agreement was reached on several issues. The following is a resume of points discussed at this meeting:
 - a. The Austrian Army in principle should be a citizens' army based on general conscription. Both rejected the principle of a professional army.
 - b. Able-bodied citizens of 21 years of age should be drafted, and the length of service should be six months for infantrymen and one year for conscripts in the technical branches.
 - c. The size of the peacetime army should not exceed approximately 22,000 men at any one time. In view of the short duration of service for individual citizens, this would make possible the training of a sufficient number of troops. Non-commissioned officers would serve six years; commissioned officers would be given an opportunity of making a career of military service.
 - d. The army would be made completely apolitical; officers and non-commissioned officers would be disenfranchised.
 - e. Honorably discharged non-commissioned officers would be given an opportunity to join the civil service. Officers would also be allowed to transfer to civil service positions after a certain period of military service.
 - f. The army would be organized into two or three brigades. The

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general staff would be held to as small a size as possible.

- g. After an intermediary period, officers would be drawn from a military academy which would be open to qualified candidates from the rank and file.
 - h. The air corps would be closely affiliated with the civil aviation program in view of the restricted number and types of planes which would be allowed to Austria by the peace treaty.
3. Both men stressed that the army would have two main functions: to keep internal order in times of crisis; to provide educational opportunities for the troops. Both leaders stated that Austria neither wanted nor needed an army for aggressive purposes. Both disavowed the ambitious plans of professional officers who have suggested an army of 50,000 or more and a minimum of one year's service for conscripts. Raab stated that the AFP members of Parliament are opposed to an army of more than 25,000 because of the expense involved. He also indicated that the agrarian leaders wished to keep the length of service as short as possible because of the shortage of farm labor.
 4. In answer to a question from Deutsch, Raab said that the AFP would not submit to pressure from the officers' lobby which is driving for a professional army. He affirmed that the AFP leadership in general favored a military establishment on the order of the Swiss Militia.
 5. The question of the type of officer personnel to be allowed leadership in the future Austrian army was treated only superficially. Deutsch voiced his party's objections to officers who formerly served under Schuschnigg even though subsequently removed by the Nazis. Raab said that he felt a compromise on questions of personnel could easily be reached when the time for decision arrived.

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